# THE GODLY MANS INQVISITION,

*LATELY*

DELIVERED IN TVVO Sermons before the Right honourable HENRY, Lord MONTAGVE, late Lord High Treasurer, priuie Counsellor, &c. *and other Gentlemen of Worship, at* KIMOLTON on their *Annuall feast day.*

BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

*BY*

R. PRESTON, Preacher of Gods Word.

*LONDON*

Printed by *Iohn Dawson* for *Iohn Bellamie*, and are to be sold at his shop at the two Grey-hounds in Corne-hill neere the *Royall Exchange*.

1622.

# THE GODLY MANS INQVISITION.

DELIVERED IN TVVO Sermons before the Right Honourable Henry, Lord Montague, late Lord High Treasurer, privie Counseller, &c. and other Gentlemen of worship, at Kingston on their Annuall Feast day.

BY

R. Parkinson, Preacher of Gods Word.

LONDON

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1623.

# TO THE RIGHT WORSHIPFVLL

Sr FRANCIS STANTON Knight,

R. P. wisheth to his present prosperitie the addition of *many dayes in the fruitfull feare of the Lord Iesus, &c.*

*Right worshipfull,*

These two following Sermons, being preached before an honored assemblie whereto I was a stranger, I could not conueniently dedicate them to any person, or particular partie thereof, least igno-

ignorance of their conditions, and want of knowledge and acquaintance ſhould accuſe me of preſumption, and too much boldneſſe: The remembrance therefore of your ſelfe, of your countenance, and fauour towards me became a ſudden obiect, emboldening me to ſend them abroad vnder your name: becauſe (as I am conſcious of your pious practiſes, ſo) I haue and doe know you a Patrone of Religion, and godlineſſe, eſteeming it your greateſt gaine to know Chriſt Ieſus, and to be found in him.

In theſe Sermons you ſhall find nothing fauouring of Affectation, or inclining vnto oſtentation, but rather affection to the ſoules of the Flocke, for from the heart-roote in Ieſus Chriſt doe I deſire their ſalvation. The ſubiect of them is, *The godly Mans Inquiſition*, wherein you ſhall ſee the eſtate of man by reaſon of ſin and corruption layd open, *viz.* that he is a ſtranger to the Lord, a vagrant from the Common-wealth of *Iſraell*, a loſt ſheepe, in bondage vnto ſinne and Sathan, without Chriſt, a child of wrath, a prodigall,

&c.

&c. And becauſe to looſe the fauour and countenance of God, is of all conditions the moſt miſerable, a vaſſallage without exception, I haue in the ſecond place ſet downe the meanes how to get out, which is diligent ſeeking of the Lord in prayer, faith, feare, repentance, holineſſe of life. Wherein alſo, that the dutie may be the more ſet forward, the place, the matter, the way, the manner, the meaſure, the end and time of ſeeking are in their due places propounded. And whereas there be certaine times when the Lord will ſpecially be found, and certaine times when he will not be found, I haue in the laſt place laid downe both, exhorting all men in the concluſion, to take the preſent day, leaſt the ouer-paſſing of it through negligence, keepe them eternally from it, and ſo bring them into euerlaſting ſeparation from the preſence of God. This is an Abbreuiation of the ſequents, which I haue preſumed as ſhaddowed with your allowance to publiſh. Be you pleaſed to accept it, be no ſeuere examiner, but a mild perſer, and alſo a

practiser of the continents, and her affection to the matter, somewhat mediate with your iudgement to censure not as you see, but as I meane. I confesse of my selfe, that I am vnable to carry the least sticke to the Altar, and vnworthie of all others to prescribe either dyet or direction to any, that hath but touched the hem of Christs garment, yet am I not ashamed to humble my selfe to others view, that by the mercie seene on me, who haue beene thus farre led into the secrets of God, they may be likewise encouraged to presse within the border of the Mount, when the horne of saluation shall be blowne. As I am I craue your pardon for my boldnesse, and the continuance of your fauour, leauing these Sermons to your vse and practise, and your selfe to the Lord, in whom I rest euer

*bound vnto you in all*
*humble obseruance,*

RI. PASTON.

# THE GODLY MANS INQVISITION.

ESAIAH 55. 6.

*Seeke the Lord while he may be found.*

THE foundation of my speech for this time is grounded on this short line, and few words of the Prophet *Isaiah*: and they well resemble that excellent construcure of our SAVIOVR, laid downe in his Gospell by *Mathew*: *Seeke first the kingdome of God, &c.* Mat. 6, 33. Where by *first* we vnderstand, primarily, chiefly before all, and aboue all things: so that God, and his kingdome of grace must be sought principally, and require the first-lings of all our labours: For, as all Obligations which runne indefinitely without limitation of time (saith the Maxime in Law) are presently due: so we in the like kinde stand bound to God: And although in this Text is

is prefixed no certaine day, yet it tells vs that wee are ingaged to euery day, and therefore all holy men vrge the present day. *Ier. 35. 15.* *Gal. 6. 10.* *Serue euery man now from his owne way: Doe good while ye haue time. While it is called to day, exhort one another. To day if you will, heare his voice: Walke in the light while you haue the light, &c.* *Heb. 3. 7. 13 15* *Ioh. 12. 35.* The Mariner sailes while the gale is fauourable. The Smith strikes while the Iron is hote. The Trauellor walkes while it is day; and the Lawyer takes his time: *viz.* euery tearme time: Now it is alwayes Tearme-time with Christians: this present day is our Tearme, and so is euery day: If then we would haue our cause to be heard, Christ to be our Aduocate, and God to giue sentence on our side, *let vs seeke him* diligently, and betimes; let vs early in the morning sanctifie the Lord in our hearts, and make him our dread. *Isa. 8. 13.*

*Coherence.* The Prophet hauing set downe in the former part of this Chapter, the sufficiencie and efficiencie of Christ, without whom nothing is auaileable to saluation (for in him is the fulnesse of the God-head bodily) and likewise hauing described the calling of the Gentiles, and how they should acknowledge Christ, and seeke the Lord; Here in this verse from the occasion taken from the Gentiles he exhorts the Iewes to emulation: *Seeke the Lord while he may be found*; as if he had said, seeing the Gentiles are so zealous, and so much enkindled to search the Lord, why should you Iewes that are the Lords peculiar people be frozen and cold in this dutie? *Seeke the Lord, &c.* *Col. 2. 9.* *Tit. 2. 14.*

In these words I will obserue these three particulars:

culars: first, *Quid*, secondly, *quem*, thirdly, *quando*: for the first, *quid* is the action, *seeke*. And this is taken from the course and practise of men, who hauing lost any thing of moment and value, betake themselues to diligent enquirie, and seeking of the same, neuer desisting till they finde: So they that purpose to giue vp their names to Christ seeke God diligently, neuer giuing ouer their Inquisitions, til they be well assured of his presence. To seeke God in this place, signifieth many things, as to labour to be reconciled to God in Christ, to turne to him by repentance, and humiliation of soule, to worship and serue him according to his word, to inuocate his holy name, to pray vnto him, to make profession of his Religion, to embrace him the true *Iehovah*, and as the onely God by a liuely faith, &c. This large signification of seeking the Lord is not onely thus meant, and expounded here, but else-where in Scripture. *Hos.* 3. 5. *Psal.* 24. 6. and 27. 8. *While he may be found*: These words include the present occasion, and time of seeking, for according to the time that God will be found, we are to seeke. Now if we seeke according to certaine rules after prescribed, he will be found presently, and therefore we are to seeke presently. *Now is the acceptable time, now is the day of Grace.* Otherwise there is a time when the Lord will withdraw himselfe, and will not be found, though we seeke earnestly, as the Prophet did for a *Man to execute iudgement, and performe righteousnesse in* Ierusalem, *and found him not*. In few words, the meaning is this: O yee

*The interpretation.*

2 Cor. 6. 2.

Ier. 5. 1.

Iewes by your disobedience and daily transgressions, you haue lost the Lords fauour and countenance, abused his gracious offers, delaying time, and procrastinating Repentance, and you haue made vnto your selues Idolls that are no Gods: Now the Lord once againe offereth himselfe in his mercies to your view, neglect not the occasion, but serue, seeke, call vpon, and worship him: if it come to passe that meanes and time slip away through carelesnesse, then all your hopes are in the winde, and you may seeke God, but he will neuer be found as a mercifull and tender Father, but rather as a terrible and a searefull Iudge.

*Doct.* 1. Sinne is the cause of the losse of Gods fauour.

*Seeke.*] This word presupposeth a former losse, we need not seeke God, vnlesse formerly we had lost God: Hence I gather this Theoreme, that by corrupt nature, and multitude of transgressions, we are loosers, not seekers of God, we are rather strangers and wanderers from him, then Inquisitors of, and true conuerts vnto him. In the corruption of nature we lost the comfortable presence of God, which in our innocencie we enioyed: by loosing our selues we lost him: and secondly, in the daily admitting, and committing of sin after grace receiued, we loose his sight and presence.

*Reason.* Sinne is a make-bate, and a schismatique, that rendeth asunder the sacred bond of peace betweene the Creator, and his creature: it shortneth his arme, and withereth the fresh boughes of his loue: It maketh a separation betweene him and vs, as the Cloud betweene the brightnesse of the

the Sunne and vs: It casteth vs into darkenesse, and thrusteth vs behinde the doore, as *Iael* did *Sisera*, that we might loath to see the face of God, as *Sisera* did the face of *Barak* and *Deborah*: So long as the *Ephesians* continued in their sinfull Idolatrie, they lost God, for it is said, that they *were without Christ, being aliens from the Common-wealth of Israel, strangers from the couenant of promise, hauing no hope, and without God.* And so soone as our progenitour *Adam* had transgressed the Commandement, in eating of *the forbidden fruit*, he went and hid himselfe in a bush, as if Gods presence had beene too hot for him: *Adam and his wife hid themselues from the presence of the Lord amongst the trees of the Garden*: fearefull they were to heare him speake, and ashamed to see his face, and therefore they seeke starting-holes, to hide themselues the further from him. In the same taking are all his of-spring to this day, if the old serpent get any of vs to plucke an apple from the prohibited tree, that is, if he winne our consents to sinne, he hath his desire, and we become vagabonds on the earth, and fugitiues from the face of God: And euer the more we offend, the further we are from God, being either like Pilgrimes now wandering vp the steepe Mountaines of pride, now downe the low vallies of despaire, now through the shadie groues of wantonnesse, now through the broad fields of licentiousnesse, now through the thornie thickets of worldly cares, now through the filthie channels of carnall lusts, rouing sometimes here, sometimes there, without

Iudg. 4.18.19

Eph. 2.12.

Gen. 3.8.

out mate and guide, the Deuill leading vs whither he list, or like Marchant aduenturers, imbarkt in the ship of securitie, sometimes hoysing vp the sailes of noysome desires, sometime filled with the merry gale of vaine and worldly pleasures, somtimes delighted with a whistling aire of filthy lucre, euer and anon running vpon the Syrtes and quicksands of sinne, to the great danger, not so much of the losse of life, and wracke of goods, as the wracke of Conscience, which is the greatest shipwracke, and the losse of Gods lone and affection, which is the greatest losse. Thus sinfull men that we are, whilest with the Prodigall we become trauellers, and Marchant aduenturers, to see the fashions of the world abroad, we become like to

Ion. 1. 3. *Ionas*, who *fled to Tarshish from the presence of God.*

Philo. de profugis. There be three things that make men forsake one anothers societie; Hatred, Feare, Shame: for hatred, the enuious man hates the companie of him that prospereth, and so doth one enemy hate another: *Iacob* fled from *Laban* because of his iniustice and Idolatrie, he hated them: For feare Children will runne from their Parents, and seruants from their Masters, for feare *Iacob* fled from *Esau*, and *Dauid* from *Saul*. For shame the Adulterer keepes his Cabin, and is couched in a chamber; and for shame *Adam* skulked in the grouе of Paradise: Tell me, thou fugitiue sinner, for which of these things doest thou seeke to estrange thy selfe from God? there is no cause of hatred in him,

Gen. 3.

Cant. 5. 10. 16 for he is wholly dectable, *the faireſt of ten thousand*: there is no cause of feare in him, for he is

the

*the Father of mercies, and the God of consolation*; he is rich in mercy, especially to them, *who haue receiued the spirit of adoption to cry Abba Father:* there is no cause of shame in him, for he is the Lord of *Glorie*. Nay, rather (vile sinner) be ashamed of thy sinnes, and bluffi at thy transgressions, whereby thou hast lost thy selfe, and a mercifull God: thou by thy wicked life, hast turned thy backe vpon thy Master, and set thy selfe so farre at oddes with him, that thou shalt draw downe no loue from him vnto thee, vnlesse thy Repentance and humiliation for thy sinne, be as the Loadstone to pull him to, and winne him againe.

Ephes. 2. 4.

Gal. 4. 6.

Psal. 24. 8. 9. & 25. 3.

*Obiect:* But how can a man wander from God, or lose him? Whersoeuer I am, God is there present; he *filleth both heauen and earth*; he is with me at my sitting, rising, lying downe, in the thoughts of my heart, words of my tongue, wayes of my feete, nay, in my reines, and bones. His presence cannot be auoided, who sitteth on the Circle of heauen, *and beholdeth the inhabitants of the earth as Grashoppers, whose throne is the heauen of heauens, and the earth is his footestoole, and his wayes are in the great deepe, &c.*

*Ob:*

Ier. 23. 24. Psal. 27. Psal. 139. 2. 3. 4

1 Reg. 8. 27. Isa. 66. 1.

*Answ:* It is true; There is neither heauen nor hell, nor the vttermost part of the Sea, neither day nor night, light, nor darkenesse, that can separate vs from God; the presence of his God head is no lesse in one place then in another: *He is well knowne in Iury, and his name is great in Israel.* But yet touching the presence of his mercie, and louing kindnesse, that is not vouchsafed to the wicked,

*Sol:*

ked, they ſhall not enioy one iot of it: In which reſpect they may be ſaid to be farre abſent from God. Secondly, God may be ſaid to be found, when the kingdome of Grace is much aduanced amongſt a people: but the vngodly they ſeeke to ſubdue it, and *to trample the precious bloud of Chriſt vnder their feete*, which makes them ſtrangers vnto God. Heb. 10. 29.

*Vſe* 1. For information. *Vſe.* Is it ſo that a man by ſinne flies the face of God: this may then let vs ſee the malice of ſinne againſt our ſoules: It will neuer ceaſe ſtretching forth an Iſhmaelitical hand, til it haue quite parted God and vs, yea, till it hath diuided vs from our ſelues, for while we are beguiled *with the deceitfulneſſe* thereof, irrationall conditions, and beaſtly qualities oppreſſe vs, and with dingthrifts, and Prodigalls, it will make vs forſake our Fathers houſe, and change his ſweet and fat land for a ſtrange Countrey, his daintie cates, and diſhes of ſweet meates, for refuſe huskes, his friends and acquaintance to become fellow-feaſters with ſwine. In a word, it will ſo mad vs, that we ſhould neuer thinke either of God, or the Deuill, of Paradiſe, or eternall plagues, if the Lord had not left time and meanes, that we might returne to our ſelues, and ſo ſeeke the Lord.

*Vſe* 2. For inſtruction. *Vſe* 2. Secondly, this Doctrine may teach vs to beware, and to take heed of ſinne, and as much as in vs lyeth, to binde it to good behauiour (we haue no greater enemy in the world) ſeeing without our circumſpection, it will goe about to ſet God and vs at eares. Oh then take the peace of it,

and

and ſeeke to ſhut it out of the doores of thy heart, that it may neuer ſhut thee out of Gods preſence. And as *Samuel* dealt with the *Amalekites*, ſo deale thou with the members of ſinne, kill them, and then bury them with *Iezabells* bones in a deepe graue, that they may no more riſe vp to hang vp-on thee: this is the next and readieſt way to get into Gods fauour, and the preſence of his grace. 1 Sam. 15.

*Vſe.* 3. Thirdly, we are herelikewiſe taught to bewaile the great loſſe of our God, and to lament the want of his gracious preſence: this is the practiſe of euery godly man, for if he thinke it the greateſt gaine to obtaine the fauour of God, then he muſt needes thinke it his greateſt loſſe to want it. If there be any ſprinkle of Regeneration vpon thee, or ſparke of grace within thee, it will moue thee to griefe and ſorrow in the abſence of God, and compell thee to ſeeke him as the Hart doth the waters, ſaying, *My ſoule deſireth after thee as the Hart after the water brookes, and as the thirſtie lands after raine.* Pſal. 143. 6.

*Vſe 3.* To bewaile our loſſe of God by ſinne.

The reaſons why godly men bewaile the abſence of God, are ſpecially theſe two: Firſt, they know what it is to want God, by ſetting a priſe and worth on him, while they haue him preſent in their hearts: they know that when by ſinne we looſe him, the ſoule is dead, grace is withered, the Conſcience tormented, and heauen turned into hell; they know that the world cannot be ſo miſerable without a Sunne, nor the bodie without breath, as the ſoule without God, the ſunne of his Church, and the ſoule of the ſoule of euery true beleeuer. Secondly,

*Reaſon* 1.

*Reason 2.* Secondly, if God depart from them for a time in displeasure, through their fall into some sinne, and then leaue a sense of his displeasure in their soules, then their soules find such a want of him, that they are not able to sustaine themselues without a present possession: In this case godlesse men being sore afflicted, will mourne for their wants: and therefore much more the godly: But alas, for all this, with the most of vs it is farre otherwise, we can easily bewaile the losse of a sheep, or a cow or an hogge, &c. We will take on as a Beare robbed of her Whelpes, and tell our neighbours our griefe, and the great losse we haue sustained: but we seldome or neuer make any moane, that we haue lost Gods fauour, because we want a sense and feeling of his blessings in his mercies: We seldome cry out in his absence, *Lord lift vp the light of thy countenance vpon vs*; neither doe we complaine, that *our iniquities haue reared vp a partition wall betweene God and vs, and so hid his face from vs that he will not heare*: neither doe we accuse our selues *as lost sheepe, that haue long gone astray.* Oh therefore let vs flatter our selues no more with those that plucke out the eyes of knowledge it selfe; *Tush, God is gone, he hideth his face, and I will neuer see*; But rather let vs resolue to seeke GOD when he is wanting, and to mourne for the want. Let vs not follow our sensualitie too farre, nor buy voluptuousnesse with a price, but say with the Athenian Oratour, when we heare how farre God is from vs by our pleasure: *I will not buy the seeking of God by Repentance at so high a rate.*

Psal. 67. 1.

Isa. 59. 2.

Psal 119. last verse.

Psal. 10. 4. 11.

*Non emam tanti pœnitere.*

*Vse 4.*

*Vse* 4. Lastly, seeing by sinne we loose God, here againe wee are exhorted, when we possesse him, when we haue found him, and are in his presence, to keepe our selues there, and to hold him fast. Let thine eye be continually vpon him, and neuer suffer him to be out of thy sight. *Behold as the eyes of seruants looke vnto the hands of their Masters, and as the eyes of a maiden vnto the hands of her mistresse; So let our eyes waite vpon the Lord our God.* As the child dealeth with his Father, he follows him vp and downe, and dare not let him goe out of his sight, but holds hard on his skirts, & keepes him with him; So deale thou with the Lord: turne thy selfe in euery good action vnto him, and if thou hast any feare of loosing, then sit the closer and hold the faster, euer remembring that the second losse is the greater, and bringeth more danger to the looser: *Dauid* set himselfe euer in Gods presence, so doe thou *stand before the Lord* continually, for this is a signe of thy obedience to the Lord thy Master, to stand before his face, and not to shrinke from his presence.

*Vse* 4. Let vs hold God fast when we haue him.

Psal. 123. 2.

2 King. 5. 16.

Thus much of the Supposition; Now of the Position, *Seeke the Lord*: Hauing laid downe, how that by sinne we are out of Gods fauour, and lose his presence of grace; it remaineth to speake of the meanes to finde the Lord, and to get into his fauour, and that is here said to be *Seeking*, whether it be by prayer, Repentance, obedience, or hearing of the word daily and diligently, &c.

*Doct.* 1. God being lost by sin must be sought by all holy meanes.

And the Point is this, that hauing lost the Lord by iniquitie, we are to seeke him againe by all

godly helpes and meanes: we must not stand vpon arguments, but resolue present diligence to seeke when God seemes to leaue the Cabin of our hearts, and begins to *write bitter things against vs.* The seruant put out of his Masters seruice, knowing the profit by it, will not stand vpon his termes; My master did me wrong, why did he thus? but he seekes all meanes to procure his masters wonted loue and affection; neither doth it become vs (Gods seruants) to argue vpon points without ground, but rather we should seeke Gods face when he calleth vpon vs to that purpose, saying, *Seeke ye my face.* Thus did the men of Israel, they *sought the Lord,* and he was fauourable & gracious vnto them, God sends not his workmen away without wages, nor those that seeke him by Repentance, in faith, &c. without a reward. *Dauid* saith, *I sought the Lord, and he heard me.* He did not so much vse his bodily feete to runne after the Lord, as the good temper of his affections to take delight in the Lord. Neither did he say, I prayed and was heard, but I sought and was heard: and thus *Iehosaphat fearing God, set himselfe to seeke the Lord:* And why are all the Elect of God, called a *Generation of seekers,* but in respect of their enquiries after Gods fauour, according as it is the brand of the vngodly, that they seeke not God?

Pſal. 27. 8.
Hoſ. 5. 3.
Pſal. 34. 4.
2 Chron. 20. 3
Pſal. 24. 6.

*Reaſon.*

And surely, if either the comforts and ioy we may reape by Gods presence, or the necessitie thereof may be of force to perswade inquirie, and to stirre vp our care, neither of them is wanting in this

this so weightie a matter: for comforts and ioy, what thoughts are able to reach to the excellency of them? Eye hath not seene, nor eare heard, nor heart conceiued the multitude and worth thereof: the presence of great men will astonish and amaze their inferiours, it will make them fearefull to behold their faces: but such is not Gods presence, his face and countenance is delectable, and *at his right hand is pleasure for euermore*: and the more we can behold it, the lesse is our feare, and the greater our reioycing: when the Arke was restored, the men of *Beth-shemesh* exceedingly reioyced: when the publicke teaching of the Law (which had a long time beene discontinued) was againe established, the people of *Ierusalem* were much comforted. But how much more will the *Children of the marriage Chamber* reioyce, when *the Bridegroome is among them*? This ioy arising from Gods presence, concerneth either the qualification of the Conscience, or the fruition of Gods fauour in the estate of glory: for the conscience, when after many skirmishes, and secret terrors, it begins to gather heart (as we say) and to feele euidences of grace, then there is much ioy, yea, such ioy, as *Peter* calls it *glorious and vnspeakeable*: Touching this Ioy looke vpon *Dauid*, boasting in the *ioy of heart*, which was giuen him by the Lords *lifting vp of his countenance vpon him*; Looke vpon the *Eunuch*, going on in his way *reioycing*, because he felt how faith in Christ was wrought in his soule; and that was *Maries* Ioy, *reioycing in spirit*, that she knew God in Christ was

1 Cor. 2. 9.

Math. 5. 8.

Psal. 16. 11.

1 Sam. 6. 13.

Nehem. 8. 12.

Math. 9. 15.

1 Pet. 1. 8.

Psal. 4. 7.

Act. 8. 39.

Luk. 1. 46.

*become her Sauiour.* For the fruition of the state of glory hereafter, it may well lift vp the beleeuers heart with comfort, *who shall stand before the lambe* Reu. accompanied with 24. Elders, *singing and reioycing*: he shall be *where God is for euer*, and shall see him *face to face*? Ioh. 14. 16. 17. 1 Cor. 13. 12. If this glimmering light of heauenly knowledge (when we see but as in a glasse darkely) be so delightfull: what shall it be to see and know the Lord as he is? If the communion we haue here with Christ in his word, and Sacraments be so ioyous, what shall it be to enioy the immediate presence of God our Father, Christ our Redeemer, the holy Ghost our Comforter? Now shall not such excellent comforts, springing from the enioyment of Gods presence be reputed worthie our inquiries? What doe many vulgar people oftentimes to see the Kings face, or at least his person? Strange things are done out of the desire thereof: As earnest should we be to get a sight of God. Thus I haue briefely pointed you to the ioy of the Saints in their apprehensions of God, and the beholding of his bright countenance: Now let me shew you the necessitie too: the necessitie in a word is such, that without God, and the presence of his grace, there is no possibilitie of admittance into heauen: for vpon all those that are without the pale of his fauour, shall be executed that sentence passed vpon the man without the wedding garment; *Binde them hand and foote,* Mat. 22. 13. *and cast them into vtter darknesse*, where shal be neither comfort, nor light, nor yet hope of either. To be in a darke Dungeon, where is no penetra-

tion

tion of light, nor any consolation, is great paine and misery: but to be excluded *from the presence of the Lord, and from the glorie of his power, is euen to be punished with euerlasting destruction.* As is the world without a Sunne, a pining child without a Mother, a distressed land without a gouernour; euen so is the soule and body without the blessed and glorious presence of God, nay, they are in a thousand times worse taking: for their exemption shall be perpetuall and easelesse, their eye-sight shall onely be of Gods wrath, and his eternall furie. They shall feed his Iustice while they are burning in fire and brimstone, which is the second death. Looke then of what necessitie, saluation, and happinesse, and life eternall is, of the same is the fauour and louing countenance of the Lord. If it be necessary for a man to seeke to be saued, it is necessary to seeke the present, and future good of his soule, by seeking a conioyning to the Lord by meanes of his grace. What can deserue the very best, and (as it were) the very quintessence of our care, if not this?

2 Thes. 1. 9.

Reu. 21. 8.

*Ob.* But it will be sayd, Why neede we seeke God, He is euery where at one and the same time, he fills both heauen and earth?

*Ob:*

*Answ.* In God we must consider two things; first, Deitie, secondly, Presence of Grace: touching the former, God need not be sought, so he is alwayes at hand, as it appeares *Act. 17. 27. Wee may seeke after him, and finde him, because he is not farre from euery one of vs.* And thus seeing his creatures, we see him. Touching his presence of grace

*Sol:*

(which is often wanting to comfortlesse Consciences) we are to seeke God, and are commanded so to doe: for he absents himselfe many times from his deare children, touching his Grace, so much, that they desire but the least impression, and token thereof, and cannot get it, whereupon they are much exercised in stirring the scinders to finde some liue-ashes, and will not giue ouer searching, till *they haue gotten some treasure*, some specialtie of Gods fauour. And this is called the *seeking of Gods face*. Psal. 27. 8.

*Quest.* *Quest.* But why should we seeke Gods face? Is it not said: *Thou shalt not see my face, for there shall no man see me and liue?*

Exod. 33. 20.

*Sol:* *Ans.* The face of God is either *prima* or *secunda*. The first is the face of his spiritualtie, of his diuine Maiestie, which cannot be seene with the darke eyes of mortalitie: Our weakenesse is so great, and his Maiestie on the other side is glorious and transplendent, that we cannot behold it without the consuming of our selues: no more then the eye can behold and looke vpon the exceeding brightnesse of the Sunne without the hurting and dazeling of it selfe. The second is the face of his loue, and fauour; this with the vnderstanding, and *the heart may be seene*: *Moses* and *Iacob* saw this face of God, and reioyced.

Eccles. 1. 16.

*Vse* 1. Is it so that euery one should set himselfe apart to seeke God by one godly helpe or other? this then may serue to reprooue the intollerable neglect of this dutie: Some say, oh, it is an easie matter to be acquainted with God, he may be

*Vse* 1. For reproofe.

soone

soone found, a little seeking will serue the turne: but let the industrious carefulnesse, continuall supplications, and the daily complainings of Gods seruants in the want of God, (yea, then when he is present in their hearts) testifie the facilitie, and easinesse of this businesse.

*Ob:* I but Sir tell me, did not Christ say, *Seeke and finde?* Therefore when, or where, or howsoeuer seeking I shall finde. *Ob:* Math. 7. 7.

*Ans.* I grant it to be true, that Christ did say so to his Disciples: and made this promise to them (in them to vs) that euery beleeuer, being in Christ, might seeke, and finde: but not that euery kinde of seeking should obtaine. The meaning of the words is this, That whosoeuer haue beene first sought, and found of God, shall seeke and finde God: but they who haue not first drawne neare to him, shall neuer find God drawing neare to them. *Sol:*

Secondly, another sort of people there is, deseruing much blame; namely, all such as plead a perpetuitie of Gods presence with them in the midst of their wants of him: Oh, I neuer wanted the Lord, and why should I goe troubling my selfe to seeke him? Alas, for the blindnesse and folly of such men: they speake without sence, to say they haue that which they neuer so much as once enioyed. Where God affordeth his presence of grace, there alwayes are other companions of it, and such as attend the Spirit: As we vse to say, Where the King is, there is his Court, his waiters, his attendants; So, euen so where God is with his Spirit, 2.

Spirit, there is his Court, and attendants, as faith, loue, obedience, feare, peace, ioy in the holy Ghost, worship, reuerence, prayer, Repentance, humilitie, &c His Angels will be about thee, his Spirit within thee to helpe thee, his Grace to vphold thee, his mercy to embrace thee: Looke then, are these present, then their Master cannot be farre off? But surely, Grace would tell thee (if thou hadst any) that there is a great want of God, that thou maist seeke daily for a supply: and that he is the farthest off from such as feele the least want.

*Ob:* The Lord hath blessed me with his good Creatures, he hath giuen me prosperitie, and riches, I finde no want of them, and therefore if the Lord were absent from me, those things should be taken away, and I should be depriued of their vse.

*Sol:* *Anſ.* A man may enioy many outward blessings, and in the possession, neither know whether God loues, or hates him. He may haue his Psal. 17. 14. *portion in this life, and his belly filled with hid treasure, he may be full of children, and leaue his substance to his babes*; and yet he may be out of Gods fauour, Rom. 9. 13. and called, *a man of the world. Esau* was fatted with the blessings of the earth, and yet he was so farre off from the Lords loue towards him, that *the Lord hated him.*

Secondly, the more couetous a miser is, the lesse 1 Tim. 6. 9. acquaintance he hath with God, because *he is filled with many foolish lusts, and enters into many temptations*, which driues him from God: and therefore it

was

was rightly ſpoken, that a Cable might as ſoone goe through a needles eye, as a rich Miſer enter into the kingdome of heauen, conſequently into Gods fauour.

Laſtly, another kinde of people deſerue equall reproofe with the former, namely, ſuch as leaue the pure Well and digge Ciſternes that will hold no water: ſuch as forſake God, and employ all their cares in and about the world. That ſeeke worldly pelfe, and externall goods, and in the meane time haue no regard at all to ſeeke the Lords good will loſt by their tranſgreſſions. It is now adayes an ordinary matter to ſee ſpirituall affaires iuſtled aſide, or rather thruſt out by the ſhoulders, that the outward man may receiue ſome contentment; and golden opportunity neglected, that the occaſion of improuement of worldly commodities, of tickling carnal delights, and of maintaining outward reputation among men may be embraced. In a word, Matters touching God are ſo ſleightly, ſo ſeldome, ſo remiſly ſought after, as if they were not worthy talking of: And matters touching the world are ſo eagarly, ſo induſtriouſly, and with that intention of minde and body followed after, as if God had made man for nothing els but to ſwallow downe goods and greatneſſe, as faſt as poſſibly he can. Oh, my Brethren, be ye in time recalled from this miſerable ſtate of miſery, and remember how faultie you are in ſeeking the things of God: your care for the earth hath ſo deuoured the care of heauenly things, as if the *leane Kine* in *Pharaohs* dreame 3. Gen. 41. 20.

dreame had eaten vp the fat. Conſider theſe things, and ſeeke the Lord in a good time, while the way is faire, the paſſage ſpeedie, the doore open, the day laſts, and while he calls.

*Vſe* 2. For inſtruction.

*Vſe* 2. As this Doctrine may reproue the offender: ſo it may ſerue to inſtruct vs to the obſeruation of the point in hand, to ſeeke the Lord: If a child in a crowd hath loſt the ſight of his tender hearted Father, or a waiting man the ſight of his kinde Maſter, or if any man hath loſt any matter of valuation, how diligently will they ſet themſelues to Inquiſitions, they will goe euery way to the wood (as the Prouerbe is) they will not cumber themſelues with other triuiall matters found in their way, but paſſe ouer them as if they tooke no notice of them; So it ſhould be with vs, tho many good commodities may lie in our way, yet let vs neuer trouble our ſelues to take them vp, for it is a more valuable commoditie then they are, that we ſeeke after. Oh, let vs be ſtirred vp on all hands concerning this dutie, whet on one another to the performance of it: And you that haue beene careleſſe herein, begin now at laſt to be better aduiſed, and thinke it not an eaſie thing to ſeeke God: Seeking requires a care, and an endeuour more then ordinary. And you that haue beſtowed ſome care this way, be perſwaded that it hath not beene ſo earneſt, ſo conſtant, ſo intentiue as it ought to be, reamend and double the ſame. Yea, let vs all redeeme as much time as poſſiblie we may for this one thing, let vs abridge our ſelues rather in our outward profits, and purſuites

of

of them, let vs rather want opportunitie in our sports, let all other things goe to wracke, rather then this one businesse should not be forwarded.

*Vse* 3. This point will teach vs in the third place a lesson of direction, where, and how to seeke Gods louing face and fauour: And therefore if you be affected with the commoditie here mentioned, you will be glad to take the time, meanes, and helpes offered. *Vse* 3. For direction.

First, we will begin with the place where God must be sought, for when we are once fully assured of his habitation (as I may so speake) and of the place where he dwels: then we may both boldly and freely seeke him. The place we must goe vnto is his house, there we must seeke him; for, as one neighbour hauing some businesse with another, goeth not to a strangers house, but to his house to seeke him: and indeed where should neighbours seeke one for another, but at their houses? So if the Lord be wanting to any soule (in as much as it crieth out, *why Lord absentest thou thy selfe so long?*) then let that soule be prostrate before the gates of the Lords house, that he may answere the complaints thereof. And that it may not long be farre from him: Consider that God hath three houses, if we misse in one, or other, yet we shall be sure to find in the third. God hath three houses. Psal. 76. 7. 8.

The first house where we must seeke God is the Church; whereto the godly often are congregated, and where also God is present after a speciall manner: *He is in the midst* of such assemblings: *Iohn found the Lord in the midst of the seuen golden* First, Church Assemblies. Math. 18. 33. Reu. 18. 1.

*Candlestickes*, that is, the true Church. The spouse sought and found her best beloued *in the tents of the Shepheards, and in the garden among the beds of Spices*: that is, in the Assembles of godly people, where graces grow as Spices vpon a bed in a garden. And so if we will finde the Lord, our resort must be to the Sanctuarie: from vnder the threshold of the doore thereof, *flow forth waters to refresh our soules*. Thither went the Prophet *Dauid* in the time of distresse, and was comforted; and thither went the people of *Israell* to see the Lords face: So that in the Congregation (where the little flocke of Christ is folded) we may seeke and finde.

Cant. 6. 1. 2.

Psal. 63. 2. And 73. 17.

*Reason.* The reason of it is, because those meanes which God hath sanctified, and set apart for our saluation, and for inquisition, are there vsed: there is the word truely and soundly preached; there are the principles of religion for those of a lower forme; there are deeper points for exercised wits; there are helpes for Magistrates, for Ministers, for priuate men, for yong and old; yea, whatsoeuer grace is lacking, there thou shalt be sure to haue it supplied abundantly; there thou shalt see the great *Mystery of godlinesse* discouered, which is, *God manifested in the flesh, &c.* And as in the materiall Sanctuary, the Lord reuealed himselfe to his people; so here to those that with Conscience seeke him will he likewise discouer himselfe in the saluation of their soules.

Heb. 5. 14.

1. Tim. 3. 16.

*Vse.* If God be pleased graciously to afford vs His sight, and remembrance in exterior temples, where

*Vse.* For reproofe.

where godly men are often assembled, then this may shew vs plainely the graceleſſe courſes of vngodly ſinners, that liue as men without houſe, harbourleſſe, the bluſtring world is their lodging roome, vncleane birds their fellowes; and the houſes of ſtrangers their dwellings. Not to ſpeake of Separatiſts, who (as if our Church had vtterly loſt her face, becauſe perhaps ſhee wants ſome beautie) doe flie from our Congregations, as if they were cages of vncleanneſſe: Nor of Popiſh Recuſants, who (becauſe they ſee not their Images, their breaden and woodden Gods in our Temples) refuſe to come neare the portalls of our Church, when *the Key of knowledge* (by which might *be opened vnto them the whole counſel of God*) is offered. Luk. 11. 42. Act. 20. 27.

Firſt, many others there be, who, that they may not be thought plaine Atheiſts, doe after a ſort ioyne with the Aſſemblies, not for loue to Gods houſe, nor for duties therein exerciſed (for ſo they caſt themſelues from the preſence of God in carnall lazineſſe, and prophane contempts,) but to ſhew their ſeruice of the time, and the ſauing of their purſes. The Prouerbe is, *As good neuer a whit as neuer the better*: It is as good to be abſent as to be dull, heauie, lumpiſh, and without ſpirit in ſeeking for God, whom they care not whether they finde or no.

Secondly, Others in ſtead of going vp to the houſe of the Lord, ſeeke the vtter deſolation of it, (ſo ill affected are they with Gods preſence) *they raze the Sanctuarie to the ground, defile the* Pſal. 74. 7.

*dwelling places of Gods name, burne vp the Synagogues of God, that no man may come to the solemne feasts of Sion, and all her gates they delight to see desolate.*

Lam. 1. 4.

Thirdly, Many delight to passe ouer Sabboths in the Ale-house and Tauernes, being gathered to heathenish consorts: Their vsuall speech is this; the Church hath enough in it that may goe to God, and pray for vs, we may stay here well enough. These passe vpon themselues sentence of excommunication, and like out-lawed persons, are depriued of the benefit that belongs to the subiects of heauen (namely, Gods protection, and enioyment of his Realme) and thus they are giuen vp to Sathan.

1 Cor. 5. 5.
1 Tim. 1. 20.

Fourthly, Others take their horse, and trauell uell about worldly businesse vpon the Lords day, pretending that they can pray and serue God on Horse-backe in their iourney as well as the best: But all these are deluded by the Deuill, whom they serue; they are cut off from the priuiledges of Gods house, *The ministery of reconciliation, the bodie of Christ edified, the seales of Righteousnesse, which are by faith:* And the preaching of the word, which is called, *The doore of faith*, is shut against them.

2 Cor. 5. 18.
Ephes. 4. 12.
Rom. 4. 11.
Act. 14. 27.

And is it not a strange thing, that whilest they runne from God, from his presence, his protection, his Church, and Congregations, they should thinke to meete with God, and finde him where he is neuer had? I may say assuredly they shall find him in his iust Iudgement, and he will meet with them in their hypocrisie to giue them a full reward:

ward: they may goe on a while, but in the meane time, God is fetching a stroke against them, which like a flaile, the higher it is lifted, when it fals will giue the greater blow, and make the deeper wound.

*Vse* 2. The Assemblies of the Saints is Gods first house where he will be found, then should *we with gladnesse goe into Bethel*, for Gods name is there heard, *Christ is there present, and the presence chamber is filled with the glory of the Lord.* The Prophet *Dauid* saw and conceiued such speciall and extraordinary benefits comming to his soule by seeking the face of the Lord in his house, that he alwayes wished himselfe there: *One thing I haue desired of the Lord, that I will require, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the dayes of my life, to behold the beautie of the Lord.* This was a matter which he desired aboue all things, and for the obtaining whereof he was very importunate with God. *My soule longeth, and fainteth for the Courts of the Lord, blessed are they which dwell in thine house, &c.* Oh that the same minde were in vs to come before the Lord in publique meetings, and in them to be partakers of the exercises of pietie, then we would say with *Iacob*, surely, this place is reuerent, whatsoeuer we haue thought of it, *It is no other but the house of God, euen the gate of heauen.* This is the first house where God must be sought.

*Vse* 2. For instruction, Psal. 122. 1. Mat. 18. 20. 1 Reg. 8. 12.

Psal. 27. 4.

Psal. 84. 1. 2. 4. 10.

Gen. 28. 16. 17. &c.

The second house, where God must be sought is the priuate familie of euery Christian. It sufficeth not to be diligent in the Church, vnlesse a man be the same at home: this was holy *Iobs* care, that

Secondly, A Christian mans familie.

Iob 1. 5. that his family might be Gods house, as appeares by his daily sanctification of his children: And

Iosh. 24. 15. of *Iohuah*, the Scripture truely relateth, *That he and his house feared God*; Intimating that while their houses were receptacles of Gods worship, they themselues (as they were Gods dutifull seruants, so they) were serious seekers of the Lords eternall loue and mercie. Our Sauiour saith, that whersoeuer two or three are gathered together, or consent in any thing in his name, he will be there present, though it be in a mans secret family. *Adams* house where God was worshipped, and

Gen. 4. sacrifices offered, was Gods house, whence *Cain* complaines he was cast out, for euery denomination is from the worthier part: therefore make thy house Gods house, and so thou shalt haue God neare thee, with his sweete fellowship, and fulnesse of blessednesse.

*Quest.* *Quest.* But what might I doe that my house may be the Lords house, to the end I may seeke and finde him there?

*Answ.* *Answ.* To this purpose are required of thee these things;

1. If thou wilt make thy house Gods Church, and so finde the Lord at home; then see that all the members in thy familie be the true members of the Church: looke to this with a diligent and heedfull eye: if there be but two righteous persons in thy house, God will there shew thee his face after a sort, but when thy whole familie may be baptized with the name of a Church, becausse there is not so much as a *Canaanite*, or an vncircumcised

cumcised person in it, then it shall be as a sweete sauour in his sight, and his glorious countenance will there be most radiant and bright.

2. Entertaine none into thy familie but such as the Lord hath first entertained into his: take none into thine house which are not of the household of Faith. This is the sweeping of the house, and making faire of the doores & gates for Gods entrance. The Prophets *eyes were to the faithfull of the Land*, that he might picke out the choicest of them for the Lords seruice, and his prayer was for the *Israelites*, that they might be corner stones, polished, and grauen to make a Princely Pallace. Psal. 101.

3. After this ground-worke is laid, then the housholder must build thereon, dealing in his familie, as the Pastor in the Church; either by way of teaching by words, and example, or by praying, or by correcting. First, teaching, and instructing of the familie is required, and that partly in reading, partly in deliuering precepts out of the Word. It is Gods Commandement, *To whet the Law continually on our children*, and to traine them vp, euen from their childhood in the Scriptures. Deut. 6. 7. Secondly, Calling them to account for things deliuered by Catechizing is needfull. This is the driuing of the nayle to the head: this hinders vaine thoughts, words, and exercises: this banisheth much folly, and ignorance that is bound vp in the hearts of children and seruants. Thirdly, Application of Gods workes past or present, on our selues, or others, to moue vnto confidence in God, by the workes of his mercie, and to feare to

offend by the workes of his iustice, is also requisite: this was holy *Abrahams* practise, for which God would not hide his secret workes from him.

Gen. 18. 19.

Fourthly, Edification of the family with *Psalmes*, and melodie to the Lord is fit and conuenient, as the Apostle teacheth vs.

Col. 3. 16.

Againe, as the Master of the house must teach by words, so by example, like *Dauid* walking in the vprightnes of his heart in the midst of his house: for the eye of the familie is vpon the gouernours thereof, as the eye of the Church vpon her Pastor.

Secondly, there must be daily praying in the familie, at least euery morning and euening solemnly on our knees, making confessions of sins, and requests vnto God, together with thankesgiuing: *Euening and morning, and at noone will I pray, and make a noyse*, saith *Dauid*. And *Daniel three times a day prayed and praysed God in his house.*

Psal. 55. 17.

Dan. 6. 10.

Lastly, there ought to be in the familie Christian Discipline, that if any member thereof should happen to be out of order, by correction, admonition, reprehension, or at worst excommunication, it may be brought to reformation. By these meanes, the priuate house shall be made Gods house, wherein he may be soone sought, and our selues sweetly solaced.

*Vse.* But alas, how careless are the most in this case? Mens Cottages are Sathans Courts, and great mens places his Pallaces. How is God sought at home, when (almost) euery member in the house is a rough, and vnhewed stone, not grauen after the similitude of a Princely building? Is not sin

so

ſo riſe, that it runnes through the ſilent, and ſecret Chambers, and like leproſie defiles the foundation, yea, the whole building? How is thy houſe Gods temple, when the Idoll of prophaneneſſe, diſorder, vngodlineſſe, &c. worſe then *Aarons* molten Calfe, is erected? How doeſt thou flatter thy ſelfe with a conceit of Gods preſence in thy whole familie, when thou mockeſt him? Thou ſeemeſt humble at the Church, but art diſdainful, ſcornefull, hatefull, arrogant, and proud at home: thou ſeemeſt to be louing, kind, and friendly at the Church, but art full of malice, bitter words, frowning lookes, and vnkind carriages at home. Thou ſeemeſt in the publique houſe of God to yeeld obedience to wholeſome Doctrine, but at home (as the Iewes did deale with the bloud of Chriſt) thou trampleſt it vnder thy feete. How doeſt thou enquire for God in thy familie, when thou giueſt a welcome entertainment to Atheiſt, Papiſt, Iew, Pagan, miſer, ſwearer, oppreſſor, and others of the ſame ranke and ſtation alike? How canſt thou expect Gods preſence on thy right hand any where, if thou ſuffereſt thy houſe to be as a cage of vncleane birds, and neither pulleſt their feathers, nor ſweepſt out their filth? Oh, I beſeech you marke my words: The outward magnificence and ſumptuouſneſſe of building, the pleaſantneſſe of ſcituation, the coſtly hangings on the walls, the rich furniture of houſhold ſtuffe, the goodly ſhew of tall, and proper perſonable men are nothing, nay, outward ciuill order is nothing, vnleſſe all godly means with a godly mind

Heb. 10.

be practised as well in the priuate familie, as in Gods publique house. Labour therefore to make your house (by the industrious and honest exercises of reading, praying, catechizing, examining, singing of Psalmes, of entertaining, maintaining, retaining godly seruants: of punishing, admonishing, reprouing, or excommunicating vngodly and sinfull people) like Gods house, then shall you haue cause of ioy, and matter offered sufficient of Gods presence.

Thirdly, A sanctified soule. 2 Cor. 6. 16.

The third house where God is to be sought, is the soule of a man. That is the temple of the liuing God, and he hath said, that *he will dwell there, and walke there.* And often haue his sonnes and faithfull seruants reioyced, that they might be in the least sort found worthie, that God would come thither. They sought him in their hearts, and found him no where else, or sooner then there.

*Quest.* But how shall I make my heart Gods Temple?

*Ans.* First, As in the Temple God was daily worshipped; there were daily sacrifices offered, the Scriptures read and expounded, and prayers preferred vnto God from his people: So must thou get a proportion in all these, if thy heart be Gods temple. First, thou must priuately, yea, secretly apart daily worship & adore him in thy soule with personall worship, concerning such thoughts and impressions of his vnutterable Deitie, as the tongue in no wise can expresse. Secondly, Thou must offer the sacrifices of praise and thankes, for his

his perſonall bleſſings, and benefits, call to mind how rich in his bountie he hath beene to thy ſoule, and ſo expreſſe thy humble thankefulneſſe vnto him. Thirdly, daily ſupplicate vnto him, and powre out thy ſoule in prayer vnto his maieſtie, deſiring the remiſſion of ſinnes paſt, preuention of ſinnes to come, ſorrow and humiliation for ſinnes preſent, begge graces fit for thy ſaluation, and ſuch ſtrength therein as may vphold thee &c. Fourthly, Solely and apart euery day reade the Scriptures, and other godly Treatiſes, as occaſion may giue leaue from honeſt labours, and being read wiſely, diſcreetly, vnderſtandingly, apply to thy vſe and benefit.

Secondly, thy Heart muſt be as the Arke within the Sanctuary, wherein were kept the Tables of the Law, written with Gods owne finger: thou muſt endeuour in obedience to all Gods Commandements: entreat God to write his law in thy heart, that *thou maiſt neuer depart from it.* Ier. 32. 33.

Thirdly, thy heart as the Arke muſt keepe the Pot of *Manna*, a type of Chriſt the foode of life: cloſe Chriſt within thy heart, and hold him as thy life, neuer to part with him; for that Pot figured the Sacraments, in which Chriſt is propounded the food of the ſoule.

Fourthly, thy heart as the Arke muſt containe *Aarons* rod that had budded, ſignifying the diſcipline & gouernment of Chriſt, vnto which thou muſt ſubiect thy ſelfe: let this rod flouriſh in thee,

and stoope with reuerence and feare to this scepter. By this meanes thy soule is Gods Temple, where he will be found as a man in his house.

*Vse.* But alas, though this be so necessary a dutie to seeke the puritie of heart, wherein is Gods delight, yet who is it that addresseth himselfe to it? Euery one is deficient in this point, the cleansing of the soule is least thought of for Gods habitation: And yet who is it, that boastes not of such a good and honest heart, that makes not his brags of such inward goodnesse, as if God had dwelt there long? Who is he that complaines of his want of spirituall furniture for his soule? But looke to thy selfe narrowly, peepe in through the windowes, and thou shalt easily finde such inward crazinesse, and lamenesse by corruption: such halting betweene God and man, such deadnesse in sinne and wickednesse, such rouing thoughts, fleshly desires, carnall and worldly purposes; naughtie intentions, and such defects of graces, as if thy heart had sworne against Gods presence, and made an vtter deniall of his entrance. Let these things be well examined, and tell me if it be not more then needfull to call for helpe, the spirit of sanctification, to cleanse and wash all white within, to purge the soule from dead workes, and to make it a cleane house for God to abide in. The way to finde the lost groat is to sweepe the house, and to sift the dust: and so labour for inward holinesse and sanctitie, get thy heart ridd of deceitfulnesse and hypocrisie, of sinne and iniquitie,

quitie, ſift the corners, ſet vp a light in it, the Candle of Faith, and vſe a proſpectiue continually into euery farre nooke of it, and then get a weeding hooke to pull out Darnell and Cockle, ſo ſhalt thou not be long abſent from the Lord, at length to thy conſolation thou ſhalt finde him. Thus we muſt ſeeke the Lord in his houſe, the publique aſſemblies, our owne Families, and Soules.

The

## The ſecond Sermon.

Secondly, ſeek with the eye of faith and obedience.

SEcondly, as we muſt ſeeke God in his owne houſe, ſo with a ſpirituall eye, as he himſelfe is a ſpirituall ſubſtance; fleſh and bloud cannot ſee him, though they ſeeke him: we can neuer finde him by the eyes of naturall ſenſes, but of faith and obedience: Gods ſpiritualtie cannot be pierced with the eye of fleſh, which ſeeth nothing but that which is finite, materiall, viſible, and circumſcriptible, as God is not; nay, if the ſoule of a man, a finite ſpirit, cannot be ſeene with the bodily eye, much leſſe the God of ſpirits, who is infinite, and of ſuch puritie as the Angels are not able to behold. S. *Iohn* ſaith, *No man hath ſeene God at any time*; and S. *Paul* ſaith, *God dwelleth in light not to be attained to, whom no man hath ſeene, neither can ſee*: and therefore concerning the outward ſight (whereby curious and ignorant men would be glad to ſee God, hardly thinking there is any God, when none in this ſort can be ſeene) the truth is, God cannot be ſeene. Neither are we able to ſee and finde God by the eye of our mind, (whileſt we are here) as it is corrupted; the reaſon is this, becauſe all our knowledge is by formes

and fashions conceiued in our minde, and for the most part floweth from the outward senses, but God (as hath beene said) cannot be perceiued by our senses. No man euer saw the glorie of the Lord, *viz.* his Essence and diuine Maiestie, no, not *Moses* himselfe, neither could he see him expressly with the eye of his minde. But thus farre we see the Lord, after an obscure fashion we see his loue and mercy, and kindnesse to vs in the reuelation of his sonne Christ, in his benenolent gifts of grace, in the remission of sinnes, iustification, sanctification, &c. But at the last day we shall see him fully in his brightnesse and beautie, euen as he is: *Now we know him in part*, sayth *Paul*, *but then we shall know as we are knowne.* 1 Cor. 13.12.

*Vse.* Grosse are those old Heretiques, the *Anthropomorphites*, that gaue to God an humane forme, &c. The Scriptures (speaking after our capacitie) giue vnto him the parts of man, as feete, hands, face, &c. And whereas they alledge some apparitions, and visions which the Fathers had; as *Abraham* of three going to destroy *Sodome*, as *Lot* of two, &c. I answere, that God appeared vnto them not in his nature, but in such a forme as pleased him. Many saw, *Sed quod voluntas elegit, non quod natura formauit*, What his will chose, not what his nature formed. Men saw him when he would, in such formes as he would, not in his diuine nature, wherein he lay hid euen then when he was seene.

Grosse likewise and ridiculous are our common conceits of God; Ignorant people suppose him

him to be a man in ſhape and paſſion like themſelues: The Epicure, who thought there was no happineſſe vnder the Sunne, but in carnall pleaſure, imagined God to be of the ſame ſenſuall humour, and deemed that freedome from buſines was his chiefeſt felicitie. And *Dauid* ſayth in the Pſalme, that the vngodly perſon, who runnes to all manner of exceſſe, ioyning with the theefe, and partaking with the adulterer, and opening his mouth with the ſlanderer, thinkes God like himſelfe: and generally, our priuate thoughts touching God are not ſo holy, ſo reuerent, ſo diuine, ſo full of reſpect as they ought to be. Pſal. 50. 18. 21

Therefore if we would ſee the backe parts of the Lord, then we muſt pray to him to open the eyes of our mindes, to cleere them with the grace of vnderſtanding, that we may ſee him now, not as he is in his eternall being, for that cannot be, but as he hath reuealed himſelfe mercifully and graciouſly vnto vs in all his ſpirituall endowments of grace. This is the ſecond thing required in our ſeeking the Lord, namely, to ſeeke him not with the eye of ſenſe or nature, but with the eye of grace, enlightened and clecred.

Thirdly, we muſt ſeeke God by his owne light and meanes: firſt, by the word in Precepts and Promiſes. This is a Lanthorne to our feete, and a light to our pathes, by which God may be diſcerned, whom the darkneſſe of the world cannot comprehend. We reade, that when God appeared to *Eliah*, *before him went a mightie ſtrong winde, which rent the mountaines, but the Lord was not in the wind.* Thirdly, ſeeke God by his meanes. 1 King. 19. 11 &c.

*wind. After the wind came, came an earth-quake, and after it a fire, but the Lord was in neither: but then at last of all came a still and soft voice, and in that the Lord was.* And that was it which most affected *Eliahs* heart; for, as the Story sayth, *When Eliah heard it, he couered his face with a mantell, and went out.* Whereby the Lord would teach vs, that as in the first deliuery of the Law, the instrument which God taught them by was a voice (he purposely forbearing to present himselfe to their eies in a visible shape, least they should stick too much vpon outward shewes) so they likewise in following times should trust especially to the same meanes, which God (as it were) by his owne mouth hath sanctified vnto them at the beginning, namely, a voyce. The nature of man rather affects that which offereth it selfe to the eye, then the naked and bare instruction of the eare: and therefore all counterfeit Religions are full of beautie, Images, signes, and bodily representations, wherewith the world is bewitched. But the instrument that brings vs to the Lord is his owne word: the Lord thought it fitter to informe *Moses* by the eare, then to giue him his desire in presenting himselfe to his eye: so he doth still hold the same course, and hath ordained the sense of hearing, to be (as it were) the pipe, by which the sauing knowledge of his will may be conueyed downe into the heart.

*Vse.* And as for those who will not be instructed by hearing, they are sonnes of wrath, past all hope of Gods louing presence; there is no course, though

in

in mans reaſon neuer ſo little, that is able to recouer them. Let it admoniſh vs, if we deſire to know God, to prepare our eares to the meanes of knowledge. Remember what *Salomon* hath ſaid, that *it is but the ſacrifice of fooles*, which all thoſe performe, who *come into the houſe of God, and are not neare, and readie to heare.* Thus much of the word, teaching vs, that a man deſirous to know in ſome ſort, or to conceiue the maieſtie of God, is inſtructed more largely by the eare, then by outward and viſible repreſentments. Eccl. 4. 17.

A ſecond meanes to ſeeke God are ſuch ſignes of his preſence as he hath made choice of to reueale his grace in. In the old teſtament beleeuers muſt ſeeke him in ſacrifices and ceremonies, and therein he gaue them gracious anſweres. The Arke of the Couenant was called the face of God, and the ſeeking of ſpeciall teſtimony of his preſence there, is called the ſeeking of his face. And becauſe he was ſo ſpecially preſent there, the *Iewes* in their Prayers muſt turne their faces towards the Arke, and towards *Ieruſalem.* And that the *Iewes* might know where to finde God at all times, he told them that he would dwell in the Sanctuary, and ſit betweene the Cherubins: So in the new Teſtament, God hath appointed certaine ſignes, as ſo many way-markes to finde him out; as the publique ſeruing of him in ſpirit and truth; reſorting to Gods Temple, and there ioyning in holy worſhip with the reſt of his people, is the way to ſeeke him. The offering vp of the ſacrifices of prayer and praiſe, *Call vpon me in the* Exod. 25. 8.

Psal. 50. 15. *day of trouble, and I will heare thee, and thou shalt praise me.* The frequenting of the Sacraments, which represent that to the eye, which the word doth to the eare: In all which he will be sought, and out of these will not be found. God cannot be seene, or found, but by his owne light, and therefore he that must seeke him, must haue the light of vnderstanding. *The Lord looked downe to see if any would vnderstand, and seeke after God.*

Psal. 14. 2.

Fourthly, seeke God in the right way. Ier. 6. 16.

Fourthly, as we must seeke God by his owne meanes; so, in the right way, which is called, *the old way*, and therefore the good way: We must not seeke God that way we lost him, for so it is likely we shall neuer heare of him: but there is another way, though a strait and backe way, which soone brings vs to him. The familie of *Iacob* (those seuentie soules) came downe to Egypt through the land of the *Philistims*, but after fortie yeares circled about to *Canaan*, through the Arabian Desert. The three Wisemen that worshipped Christ were warned by the Oracle, to goe into their Countrey another way. Imitate these Sages, thou lost God by transgression, seeke him not in that common beaten way, but by obedience, and humiliation: thou lost God by adultery, seeke him by chastitie: thou lost him by the way of pride, hatred, wantonnesse, wrath, ryot, seeke him by the way of humilitie, loue, temperance, patience, sobrietie: thou lost God by the way of couetousnesse, contention, swearing, prophanenesse, seeke him by the way of contentation, peace, honouring his name, holinesse of life: thou lost him by the

the way of vaine ſuperſtition, ſeeke him by the way of Chriſtian Religion: to conclude, as thou loſt him by the way of ſinne, ſo now ſet on to ſeek him by the way of repentance, and reformation: A reformed life is the new way, and beſt way; till thou ſet foote in it, thou art out of the right way, and ſoone ſhalt looſe thy way to God: enter into it, and bid farewell to thy ſinnes, that thou maiſt with a quicke diſpatch, wheele about into thy owne Countrey.

Fiftly, as we muſt ſeeke God in the right way, ſo in Gods manner, and that is diuerſe ſorts of wayes. Firſt, Earely: This was the Prophets practiſe; *Early in the morning will I ſeeke thee.* That is, euery morning, the beginning of my worke ſhall be to looke towards thee; I will beginne my duties in faithfull inuocating thy helpe, and aid. And as in the morning of the day, ſo alſo in the morning of thy life, forget not to ſeeke God by Repentance, faith, obedience, &c. This is the chiefe ſeaſon: *Remember thy Creator in the dayes of thy youth.* A wound lookt to at firſt when its freſheſt is ſooneſt healed; A groat newly dropt downe through the fingers, if it be preſently ſought after will ſoone be found: So will God in youth, from whence (as a friend) he hath lately departed, by reaſon of ſinne. Behold then, as euery day of thy life, ſo principally thou oweſt the prime part of thy life to this dutie, when thou art ſtrongeſt and apteſt.

Fiftly, ſeeke God in his owne maner. 1. Early. Pſal. 63. 2.

Eccl. 12. 1.

But many deferre to ſeeke the Lord, vntill the laſt weeke of their life, the laſt day of the weeke, the

'the last houre of the day, the last minute of the
'houre. It is an exorbitant course, while the ship
'is sound, the tackling sure, the Pilot well, the
'sailes strong, the gale fauourable, the Sea calme,
'to lie idle at Rode, carding, dicing, drinking,
'burning the seasonable weather, and when the
'ship leakes, the Pilot sicke, the Mariners faint,
'the stormes boysterous, and the Sea a turmoile
'of outragious surges, to launch forth, and hoyse
'vp saile for a voyage into farre Countries: and
'yet such is the skill of euening seekers, who in
'the morning of youth, and soundnes of health,
'and perfit vse of reason, though they cannot re-
'solue to weigh the Anchor, and cut the Cable
'that with-holds them from seeking of Christ,
'neuertheles, they feed themselues with a strong
'perswasion, that when their wits are distracted,
'their senses astonied, all the powers of the mind,
'and parts of the body distempered; then for-
'sooth, they thinke suddenly to become Saints
'at their death, howsoeuer they demeaned them-
'selues as Deuils all their life.

Psal. 57. 9. 1 Sam. 15. 12. Gen. 21. 14. Ioh. 8. 2. Ioh. 20. 1.

Let vs awake from sinne with *Dauid* early, rise with *Samuell* early, with *Abraham* send away *Hagar* early, with Christ and his Audience come to the Church early, seeking the Lord with *Mary Magdalen* early: Of this point more largly touching the opportunity of seeking, hereafter following. Secondly, Earnestly; As the husbandman for gold, siluer, and his earthly Commodities, so we must seeke for this spirituall and eternall treasure: the former seekes eagarly, and instantly, and

2. Earnestly.

so

ſo muſt we. Our deſire as it is to enioy, ſo it muſt be earneſt and feruent in the purſuit; we ought to neglect no time, nor pretermit any the leaſt occaſion of finding. A loitering man that cares not whether he worke or no, may get for his idleneſſe a ſuit of ragges: and he that thinkes to gaine Gods graces with nothing adoe, may well goe without them. There goes the ſtriuing for maſteries before the Crowne; a painfull ſweating race before the getting of the goale, and an induſtrious diligence (notwithſtanding all ſerious thoughts to this purpoſe) before the obtaining of the Lords grace and fauour. Prou.

Seeke painefully, not careleſly, not ouerly, as the woman for her groat; *ſeek as for ſiluer, ſearch as for gold.* The mint of gold lies not in the firſt ſpade it lies deeper: ſearch with a deſire of finding; for its well if after all paines, we finde at the laſt. Luke 15. Pro. 2. 4.

Thirdly, Sincerely, with a good and honeſt heart. *Quod cor non facit, non ſit*; What the heart doth not is not done at all. *Adams* body being newly framed of the ſlime of the earth, lay liueles and breathleſſe, vntill the breath of life was breathed into it; So the action of ſeeking God, with all the circumſtances and tearmes thereof, is nothing worth in the ſight of God, vntill from the Altar of the heart, the fire of zeale, ſinceritie, and integritie incenſe them. S. *Peters hidden man of the heart*, S. *Pauls obedience from the heart*, *Circumciſion of the heart*, &c. are acceptable to GOD. Therefore in our ſeeking the Lord, let our heart march along, that ſo we may ſerue him with the Thirdly, Sincerely. 1 Pet. 3. 10. Rom. 6. 17. Rom. 10. &c. Deut. 10, 16.

best member we haue. As *Ioseph* charged the Patriarches, not to see his face, vnlesse their brother *Beniamin* came with them: so standeth the Lord affected to the heart: if thou wilt goe to the Lord goe with thy heart. Ier. 29. 13. *Yee shall seeke and find me*, saith God, *because yee shall seeke me with all your hearts*. Thus did the Prophet *Dauid* seeke the Lord, as he testifieth in his owne words, Psal. 119. 10. *with my whole heart doe I seeke thee*.

This condemnes hypocriticall seeking, which is deceitfull; It shall neuer finde acceptance with God, nor see his louely countenance. It drawes neare to God with the lips, and toucheth the crest of heauen (as it were) with the mouth, but the heart is far from God. If thy heart be not single, then *Peter* in the person of *Simon Magus* hath read thy doome. Act. 8. *Thou hast no part in true Repentance, because thy heart is not right in the sight of God.* If the old Pagan soothsayers at any time missed the heart in the entrailes of the Sacrifice, or if they found it without panting and mooning, they were wonderfully appauled, and strongly feared that some danger would ensue. For they obserued, that in the sacrifice of *Iulius*, the heart was wanting: and immediately after, his most familiar friends conspired against him, and stabbed him in the Capitoll. They likewise obserued in the sacrifice of *Pertinax*, how the heart lay still without motion, whose death presently following, the people lamented with this wailing acclamation, While *Pertinax* raigned we liued securely, and feared none. In our Christian sacrifice of

prayers

prayers and repentance, alas, the heart is wanting, or at leaſt not ſtirring, there is ſo little faith, feare, obedience, zeale, ſinceritie among vs. What this heartleſſe ſeruing, ſeeking of God meaneth, I cannot in particular diuine. I am no Prophet, nor the ſonne of a Prophet; yet ſure I am, it portends no good. For preuention therefore of imminent Iudgements, let vs ſeeke the Lord heartily, giuing him the whole and entire poſſeſſion thereof, as himſelfe iuſtly cals for it ſaying, *Turne yee vnto me with all your heart.* Heb. 10. 22. Deut. 16. 16.

Fourthly, ſeeke God in his ſonne Chriſt, He is the onely Mediator that paſſeth betwixt God and vs, without whom none can come vnto, and find his Father. He is our *Iacobs* ladder, whoſe humanitie toucheth the earth, and his diuinitie reached to heauen. *He is that new and liuing way, through whom we haue acceſſe to the Father. He is the way, the truth, and the life.* Fourthly, in his Sonne Chriſt. Heb. 10. 20. Iohn 14. 6.

*Ob:* But how ſhall we come vnto Chriſt?

*Anſ:* The way to him is faith; for, *We walke by faith, not by ſight.* He that ſeekes God to finde him muſt beleeue in him. We are a generation of ſeekers, of them that ſeeke the *face of the God of Iacob.* If we follow faith as our guide we ſhall neuer erre: yet miſtake me not, I meane not a naked, ſolitary, imaginary fancie of faith; this is preſumption, not perſwaſion, but a ſauing, a ſanctifying, a iuſtifying faith: a faith working by loue. This way to Chriſt hath the approbation of the Spirit, rounding the faithfull in the eare, *This is the way, walke in it,* and long agoe prophecying 2 Cor. 5. 7. Heb. 11. 6. Pſal. 24. Iſa. 30. 21.

Isa. 35. 8. of it: *there shall be a way, and the way shall be called holy, the polluted shall not passe by it*; Neither Lyon, nor Beare, nor any hurtfull creature shall walke in it. Therefore whosoeuer *walke according to this rule, peace be vpon them, and mercie, and vpon the Israel of God.*

Gal. 6. 16.

This condemnes the Papists that seeke Gods fauour by other wayes then the true statue Christ, the Virgin *Mary*, and a number of their owne Canonized Saints make a way for them, thus say they; but Gods precious Oracle finds no tongue speaking to this purpose: It onely sheweth vs guidance to God, in, and through Christ.

This also condemnes the Solifidians (yea Nullifidians) that runne well but quite beside the marke. *Ahimaas* by running the neareſt way outstripped the Egyptian; and many make a short cut to Christ, by sory conceits as hote as flames: but the way to him (leading through the intricate Mazes of this our Pilgrimage) is a sound guiding faith: Make this thy rode, and then (though not so soone as thou wouldest) thou shalt see God in his brightnesse of loue and mercie.

2 Sam. 18. 23.

Fiftly, Resolutely.

Fiftly, Resolutely; Resolution is necessary to this point. The Souldiers resolution is the battell: the Sowers resolution is his plowing, and sowing: the Schollers resolution is his studies: And all our resolution ought to be this godly resolution to seeke the Lord. *Let the dead bury the dead, I will follow hard towards the marke of the high calling. I will seeke God.* *Agrippa* almost perswaded to be a Christian, was altogether no Christian:

Phil 3. 11. 12.

vnset-

vnſetledneſſe is the breake-neecke of many Chriſtian courſes, when there is a purpoſe, and then no purpoſe, a will and no will to ſeeke God. It is not leaden heeles, but faint and dead hearts that makes vs ſlagger, and vntill the fire of determination, together with the hot coales of ſtedfaſt reſolution enflame vs onwards in our Inquiſition, we ſhall not enioy the promiſed *Canaan*, that land of fruitfulnes, where God is perpetually reſident. Therefore as *Dauid ſwore and ſtedfaſtly purpoſed to keepe Gods righteous iudgements*; ſo let his caſe be ours, that we may with full purpoſe bend our ſelues in Repentance to ſeeke the Lord, whatſoeuer other occaſions and matters may caſually fall in our way. Pſal. 119.

Sixtly, Directly; Beware of blind lanes, and circuiting perambulations: crooked wayes and crooked feete will caſt backward. *Peter* was ſhent for walking with a wry foote to the Goſpell. Therefore take heed to thy feet, and *make ſtraight pathes vnto them*. The way to heauen is both ſtraite and ſtraight, like the *ſtreete in Damaſcus*, which was called the *ſtraight ſtreete*. He that goes about to ſeeke God, muſt goe as *Paul* to *Coos*, with a ſtraight courſe, therefore as thou art careſull to ſet on, ſo be as diligent to ſet out in the right and direct paſſages; leaue by-wayes and wrie-wayes to nocturnall walkers, perambulations and circuitions to Sathan, that infernall Peripatetike. Such as will obtaine Gods mercie, and finde his tokens of grace, muſt neither turne to the right hand of ſelfe-pleaſing ſingularitie, nor to the left hand

Sixtly, Directly. Gal. 2. Eccl. 5. 1. Heb. 12. 13. Act. 9. 11. Act. 21. 1. Deut. 5. 32. 33.

hand of vulgar impietie: but walke in the true profession of the Catholique faith, and in an honest vocation, warranted by Gods word.

Seuenthly, Constantly. Math. 24 13.

Seuenthly, Constantly; Continue seeking. *He that continues to the end shall be saued.* Gods grace is worth all our seeking, though we should seeke it a thousand yeare, giue not ouer till it be found.

Reu. 2. 10. And 2. 26.

*Be watchfull to the end and thou shalt haue the crowne of life*, and he that *keepeth my workes to the end, to him will I giue power ouer nations.* What a shame is it then to recoile and fall off from seeking, bending backe *like a broken Bow*;

Psal. 78. 57.

to begin in the spirit and end in the flesh? What a shame is it after thou hast fed on Angels food, to lust after the Onions and Garlicke of Egypt? After thou hast escaped the filthinesse of the world, tasted of the good Word of God, and of the ioyes to come,

Heb. 6. 5. 2 Pet. 2. 21. 22.

to *turne from the holy Commandement, and with the dogge to returne to his vomit?* What did it profit *Demas* to forsake the Gospell, which once he professed, and to turne worldling, which dearely he loued? Or the yong man to haue beene trayned vp in the keeping of the law, and afterward to depart from Christ for the loue he had to his possessions?

Mar. 10. 21.

and what good shall we reape in seeking, repenting, praying, humbling, hearing, &c. if we faint and giue out before we obtaine the thing sought?

Gal. 6. 9.

Like as he that runneth in a race, vnlesse he hold out to the goale, obtaineth not the price, and therefore sayth *Paul, I haue finished my course*, as it

1 Cor. 9.

auailed not *Lots* wife to haue gone out of *Sodome*, and after to looke backe: So they shall neuer

2 Tim. 4. 7.

come

come to the Lord, that lagger by the way, that are wearie of the dutie vndertaken, and runne themſelues out of breath, before they come to the end of their race. And if ſuch as ſeeke, but before the end giue out, ſhall not finde, what then ſhall become of our wicked prophane wretches that neuer ſeeke at all? What ſhall become of them that ſeeke onely vanities? Which flie not, but ſeeke the corruption which is in the world, that care for nothing but backe and belly? If God reiect the righteouſnes and will of the Iewes, what hope canſt thou haue which neuer thinkeſt of God, but to blaſpheme him? Which delighteſt onely to wallow in abhominable ſinnes? I muſt tell thee that ten thouſand times thy betters are in hell, euen ſuch which haue rapt hard at heauen gates, which haue beſtowed many houres in prayers, much money on the poore, &c. If ſuch as ſeeke, miſſe, for ſeeking amiſſe, much more thoſe that ſeeke not at all, or the contrary.

This may aduiſe vs to *renue our ſtrength as the Eagle, to waite on the Lord, to runne and not be weary, to walke and not faint.* Trees of the Lords planting continue their fruits indeficiently, neither doe their leaues drop off. Let vs be prouoked to conſtancie in ſearching the Lord, and hereunto let vs conſider motiues, and meanes. Pſal. 112. 6.

1. *Motiues.*

1. The end of Redemption is to follow the Lord, to ſerue him in righteouſneſſe and holines all our dayes. 2. Righteouſneſſe departed from is vaine and forgotten. All labour, prayers, repentance, Luk. 1. 75. Ezek. 18. 24.

tance, obedience, yea, all ſufferings are loſt, as the
Gal. 3.4. *Galathians* ſuffered many things in vaine. 3. Thou
ſhalt be iudged as thou art found when the Lord
comes. The queſtion ſhall not be, what thou waſt
once, but what thou art, not how thou began to
ſeeke, but how thou continuedſt in Seeking.
4. Perſeuerance at length brings home the pro-
fit, it knits vs indiſſolublie to the Lord, and puts
Rom. 2.7. vpon our heads the *Crowne of glorie.* Glory and
immortalitie is the part onely of ſuch *as by conti-*
Luk. 22.28. *nuance in well doing ſeeke God.* And our Sauiour
is expreſſe, *to you which haue continued with me haue*
*I appointed a kingdome.*

2. *Meanes.*

1. Get an infallible teſtimony of Gods fauour,
Ioh. 6.40. ariſing from the wiſe application of Gods promi-
ſes, and the ſure witneſſe of his Spirit. 2. That
thy ſelfe purified, make conſcience to repent of
ſinne, and reſpect all Gods Commandements.
3. Continue the vſe of the meanes of preſeruati-
on, as hearing, reading, praying, receiuing of the
Sacraments, &c. 4. Ioyne thy ſelfe with ſuch as
daily ſeeke the Lord. 5. Labour to know the ne-
ceſſary vſe and worth of the Lords preſence, that
ſo thou maiſt confeſſe and profeſſe his goodneſſe
amid humorous opinions and ſtrange oppoſiti-
ons. 6. Be not too hote and ouer-haſtie at firſt,
*Nullum violen-*
*tum perpetuum.* but meeke, tractable, ſociable, for boyſterous, and
hot-ſpurred natures will not hold long. 7. Be e-
uer warie, and circumſpect to walke on by feare,
alwayes doubting thine owne weakneſſe, and ſuſ-
1 Cor. 10.12. pecting thy ſtrength. *Let him that ſtandeth take*
*heede*

*heede leaſt he fall.* Thus of our direction in ſeeking the Lord.

*While he may be found*] There is a time (it ſeemes) when God will be found of his ſeruants that ſeeke him: It is his owne promiſe, and he will not gain-ſay it. *The poore ſhall not alway be forgotten, the hope of the afflicted ſhall not periſh for euer.* It makes God yearne within himſelfe to ſee the godly ſeek him in diſtreſſe, and himſelfe to with-hold his preſence from them. Therefore the firſt time wherein God will be found, is the godly mans exigents, and extremitie: *When thou art in tribulation* ſaith *Moſes, and all theſe things are come vpon thee, at the length, if thou ſeeke the Lord, he will not forſake thee. Dauid* called out of the deepe, and God heard him. *Moſes* cryed at the red Sea, and then God was found. *Abraham* three dayes after the Commandement, found God on the Mount. And after three dayes when the caſe was hopeleſſe, and the Diſciples faith a little preiudiced, Chriſt roſe againe.

Pſal. 9. 18.

Times to find God.

1.

Deut. 4. 29. 30

Secondly, another time of finding God, is the time of preaching Gods pure word, by it God knockes at the doore of our hearts, and deſires entrance; By it he ſo reueales himſelfe to the congregation, that they may ſpiritually by the illuminated eye of the minde, behold him preſent after an admirable ſort among them. The time of preaching the Goſpell in Scripture is called the *Day of viſitation.*

2.

Reu. 3. 20.

Thirdly, another time of finding, is when we haue vſed all godly exerciſes, & heauenly meanes

3.

in ſeeking: for to ſit ſtill and doe nothing is to want the price. The Spouſe in the *Canticles* wanted her beloued, when ſhee would not follow after him, but lay ſlugging on her bed. And when we are like ſtanding Ponds, couered with greene and filthie ſtuffe of idleneſſe, we are aliens from God. But when we fall to enquiring after him among the watchmen in the darke of the night, through dangerous ſtreets, with a good heart, eagarly, directly, reſolutely, continually, then he comes to vs, thruſts in his hand by the hole of the doore, calls vpon vs, and brings with him ſuch gracious gifts, as are worthie our paines and induſtrie.

*Vſe* 1. This may teach vs to cenſure charitably of the afflicted, and diſtreſſed in Conſcience: their ſorrowes may ſeeme ſo much to haue ſouced them, and they are ſo ſauced with the bitterneſſe of inward terrours, that to thy thinking God hath vterly forſaken them. But I ſay learne to be wiſe, and deceiue not thy ſelfe. 1. There is a time wherin God will be fauourable vnto them, wipe away their teares, and end their ſorrowes, which is beſt knowne to the Lord, perhaps it ſhall not be theſe many yeares, or moneths: but ſure it ſhall come, and God will be preſent. 2. God loues an humbled ſpirit, yea, it is ſuch a thing that like an Adamant it drawes him thither where it is. 3. God is the God of the afflicted, to giue them eaſe in his good time, he hath made his promiſe to them to be *their couer from the raine, and a wall of defence from the ſtorme and tempeſt.*

Pſal. 51.17.

Eſay. 65.

Beſides,

Beſides, conſider what may befall thy ſelfe, their caſe may be thine, God is able to burthen thee with the like griefes, and agonies, and therefore deale louingly, wiſely, and charitablie with them.

Secondly, Is there a time when God will be found; then let no good and honeſt heart be diſmaied, though God be not preſent when it vſeth meanes: let it not obiect againſt God and ſay, *Why hideſt thou thy ſelfe, O Lord?* For he is not alwayes there at firſt call, neither will he grant (oftentimes) the requeſts of his people vpon two or three petitions, or many prayers, and it may be for their further good and profit. *Vſe 2.* Pſal. 10. 1.

1. The Lord hereby will try their faith, and patience: *Iob* was tryed to the vttermoſt, before he found God taking his part, and ſo became an example of patience. 1.

2. They may hereby ſee the weightie Talent of their ſinnes, that hath preſſed them downe ſo farre from Gods face. If the Lord ſhould but lightly touch vs, we ſhould but ſleight our ſins. 2.

3. Their deſire muſt be the more earneſt as his abſence is the more painfull; when the Spouſe had ſought Chriſt here and there, and could no where finde him, at length finding him ſhee tooke faſt hold on him, and would not let him goe. 3.

4. Their prayer and paines is not worth the thing they ſeeke for, God will keepe it away for a time from them, that they may value it according to a faithfull eſteeme: and be more earneſt, and often in praying, and labour. 4.

5. Or it may be, all this while God is absent because they haue not sought him according to his will, or his Word, as *Zebedees* sonnes, they asked they knew not what: or after such a sort, or in such a thing as he will not be found in, as *Paul* sought God to remoue away the pricke of the flesh, yet God would not be found in that; but in the supply of sufficient grace was he found.

But for all this that I haue said, God will be found of such as seeke him in feare and awe, and after a good and godly manner.

*Ob:* But I am vnworthie to finde God, who haue prouoked his wrath like an vnkind wretch, and that euery day.

*Ans:* Esteeme not lesse of thy selfe then God esteemeth of thee, in *euery nation he that feareth him is found of him.* He keepeth open house: his heauenly Palace hath three gates in the East, three in the West, three in the North, three in the South, that the glory of Iewes & Gentiles may come in: He thinketh not his owne presence too good for vs: but *where he is there shall his seruants be.* This was his promise, because it was his pleasure. Therefore Christ saith to his Father. *Father I will that those whom thou hast giuen me be with me, that they may see that glory which thou hast giuen me.* With this hope he comforted his Disciples; *In my Fathers house are many mansions, I goe to prepare a place for you, and if I goe to prepare a place for you, I will come againe and receiue you vnto me, that where I am there may yee also be.*

*Seeke God while he may be found* ] Another thing worthie

5.

*Ob:*

*Ans:*

Act. 10.

Reu. 21.

Ioh. 12. 26.

Ioh. 17. 24.

Ioh. 14. 2. 3.

worthie obſeruation, is the opportunitie of ſeeking, ſo as God may be found, and that is the preſent time; Hence learne againe, that *the moſt ſeaſonable ſeaſon to ſeeke God is the preſent ſeaſon.* There *is a time for each thing vnder the Sunne*, ſaith *Salomon*, but for this dutie, no time ſo conuenient as the very inſtant. In worldly buſineſſe deliberation is very neceſſary, & it is held a great point of policie to deliberate long before a man determine any thing: but in this caſe it is dangerous to ſtand to deliberate.

*Doct:* The preſent time is Gods time. Eccleſ. 3. Τὸ νῦν.

1. Becauſe to deferre is vaine and fond preſumption. I neede not yet ſeeke God ſayth the yongſter, nor repent, nor pray, nor doe well, &c. It is not good to be religious too ſoone, for feare yong Saints proue old Deuils: when I am growne old then I will bethinke my ſelfe of this matter. Vpon this in-bred preſumption he is all for to morrow, crying out with *Domitians* Crow, *Cras, cras*, to morrow, to morrow, when as *he knoweth not what the morrow may bring forth*, Conuerſion, or Confuſion. *Auguſtine* in that excellent Booke of his Confeſſions, ſpeaketh to all yong men in his owne perſon, perſwading them not to deferre this good worke. How long, ſaith he, ſhall I ſay to morrow to morrow? Why doe I not now? Why do I not now make an end of this filthines? Yea, the very Heathen Poets haue condemned this procraſtination, and would haue men to lay hold on the preſent time. It was good counſell which good *Eleazar* gaue his Diſciples; *Be ſure yee repent one day before death.* When replie was

*Reaſon* 1. Delay is vaine and preſumptuous.

Prou. 27. 1. *Quamdiu cras, cras, quare non modo, quare non hac hora finis turpitudinis meæ.*

*Qui non eſt hodie, cras minus aptus erit.*

*Sera nimis vita eſt craſtina, viue hodie, &c.* Ouid. Mart. Perſ.

made, the day of death is vncertaine, therefore he said repent this day least to morrow yee die. Thus stands our case. A poore traueller by chance slips
D: Hulls Sermon at the Crosse. Octob. 18. 1612. ‘ into a pit, and in his fall catches hold of one ‘ twigge. The pit is deepe, and in the bottome ‘ full of cruell Serpents. While there he hangeth ‘ by that poore twig, anon comes an hunger-bit- ‘ ten beast, which byting, and browzing on other ‘ boughes, is each moment ready to crop off that ‘ twig: Now in what a wofull plight is this di- ‘ stressed creature. This traueller is man, the slen- ‘ der twig is fraile life, this pit is hell, those Ser- ‘ pents, fiends, and wormes of Conscience, the ‘ hunger-bitten beast is death: Say now were it not foolish presumption to deferre Repentance vpon hope of long life, depending on so doubt- full condition? Many yong men are taken away on the sudden, before euer they looke, or prepare for death. Iob. 21. 13. And 24. 24. *They spend their daies in wealth and suddenly they goe downe to the graue, and are cropt off as an eare of Corne.* Haue we not examples euery day almost of some that goe well to bed at night, and are found dead in the morning? And of others that drop downe by the high way side, and die in the field? We may not take vpon vs to determine peremptorily of such, because Rom. 11. 33. *the iudgements of God are vnsearchable, and his wayes past finding out.* Therefore adde not one euill day vnto another. Math. 6. *Sufficient for the day is the euill thereof:* yesterday, to day, to morrow, time past, present, and to come, that is, all the dayes of our life are ἡμέραι λύπης dayes of sorrow.

2. Delay

2. Delay is danderous: breeds ſecond nature, and cuſtome of euill, whereon God vſually layeth a fearefull commination; *Let him that is filthie be filthie ſtill.* And when the ſoule is invred to an euill habit, it is hardly capable of better impreſſions and vertuous diſpoſitions. *Can the Black-moore change his skin, or the Leopard his ſpots? So hard it is for them to doe well who haue learned to doe euill.* The *Iſraelites* long acquainted with *Egyptian* bondage, were loath to leaue it; but the hurt was their owne, & their loſſe had beene greater if the Lord had not redeemed them with a ſtrong arme. When ſinne pleads preſcription, and Sathan poſſeſſion, the Soule of the Combatant ſhall finde enough to doe to be rid of it; for, his *bones were filled with the ſinnes of his youth, and now they will ſleepe with him in the duſt.*

2. Delay is dangerous.

Reu. 22. 11.

Ier. 13. 23.

Iob. 20. 11.

3. Deferred ſeeking is diſmall and diſaſterous. He that neglects to day ſhall haue no time to morrow, but ſhall for his negligence purchaſe an eternitie of diſpleaſure. The rich man, *Luk.* 12. promiſed himſelfe many dayes of pleaſure; *But thou foole* (ſaith the Text) *this night ſhall they fetch away thy ſoule.* And many a man feeds his conceit with an Euening Conuerſion, and with the Backe, to ſpread his wings of Repentance in the twi-light; but that is not Gods houre, and therefore his head and heart may ake with crying, but ſhall not be the better, for he ſhall end his dayes in woe: this is an approued truth, *Eſau* ſought the bleſſing in vaine, *though he ſought it with teares, when there was no place for Repentance.* The fiue fooliſh Virgins

*Reaſon* 3. It is diſaſterous.

Reu. 10. 6.

Luk. 12. 19.

Heb. 12. 17.

Math. 25.

gins comming too late, when the Bridegroome was entred, and the doore ſhut, had a fearefull and finall repulſe, *I know yee not*; When I called, yee
Prou. 1. 28. anſwered not; when I ſaid, *Returne to me yee ſonnes of Adam, yee would not returne*: therefore *when you ſhall call vpon me I will not anſwere; when you ſeeke me early I will not be found, &c.* Oh, therefore let vs not waſt away that little light of time left vs, in gaming, ryoting, reuelling, drinking, dauncing, dallying, ſwaggering, ſwearing, &c. but take preſent hold on it ſo friendly ſmyling; for, as Chriſt ſayd of *Iohn Baptiſt, This is Eliah, if yee will receiue him*; So, I ſay, This is the time of our repentance, euen this houre, this minute, this moment.

*Reaſon* 4. The precepts and examples of others may moue to this dutie. Ioh. 12. 35. And 9. 4. 4. For the performance of this ſpeed-requiring dutie, we neither want ſufficient Precepts, nor examples of others. Firſt, we haue many incitements and precepts. 1. Of Chriſt. *Walke in the light while yee haue the light, for the night commeth when no man can worke. Ieruſalem, Ieruſalem, would to God that in this thy day, &c.* 2. Of Gods Children, who all are ſo nearely conioyned in vrging the preſent opportunitie, that they need not be rehearſed, counſelling vs in generall to *buy the truth, but not to ſell it, to redeeme the time, to gird vp our loines, &c.* Secondly, we haue ſtore of examples vnto this dutie, as 1. of Chriſt, who like a Gyant ran his race, and as the Sunne in the firmament he *went about preaching the word, doing good, and healing all diſeaſes among the people.* He gaue his eyes no ſleepe, his eye-lids no ſlumber, nor the temples of his head any reſt, vntill his Father

Eph. 5. 16. Prou. 23. 23. 1 Pet. 5.

Math. 4. 23.

gaue

gaue him his *Quietus eſt: Sit thou on my right hand.* 2. Of the Angels, who attend the Lord, and doe his heaſts and his will at the firſt command with ſpeed, they make no delayes, but when the Lords pleaſure is to doe his meſſage they runne. 3. Of holy and godly men, to whom as ſoone as the Lord ſayth, *Seeke my face*, they forthwith addreſſe themſelues to it, and ſhape this anſwere, *Thy face Lord will we ſeeke.* *Zacheus* being bidden to *come downe from the tree, came downe haſtily, and receiued Chriſt ioyfully.* When God charged *Iacob* to returne into the land of his Fathers, and to his kindred, he protracted no time, but informing *Rahell* and *Lea* of the neceſſitie of his voyage, he ſuddenly departed, without taking his leaue of *Laban*; and the prophet *Dauid* ſayth of himſelfe, I *conſidered my wayes, and turned my feete vnto thy teſtimonies, I made haſte, and delayed not the time, &c.*

Luk. 19. 6.

Gen. 31.

Pſal. 119. 60.

Againe, we are taught from the vnreaſonable creatures, to obſerue our time, *The Storke knoweth her appointed time, the ſwallow her ſeaſon.* Why ſhould we that are endowed with reaſon neglect the gracious time, *why ſtand we idle, or ſit we gaping one on another?* Let vs put on *the ſhooes of the preparation of the Goſpell on our feete*, and let vs take the ſtaues of trauellers in our hands, that ſo we may make haſt to him, who will crowne our righteouſneſſe imputed by Chriſt, with glory and immortalitie.

Ier. 8. 8.

Math. 20.

Gen. 42. 1.

*Vſe* 1. This Doctrine makes againſt all ſuch as haue a iuſt opportunitie of Repentance, and yet driue it off. Some are viſited with the weightie hand of

God, through ſickneſſe, infirmities, loſſes, &c. One would thinke this time would wholly preſſe their Conſciences with this ſo good a dutie, and vrge a perſeuerance of humiliation, but yet behold, no ſooner is Gods hand remoued from them, but like Horſes well fatted, and pampered, they kicke againſt their maiſter, and fall to tumbling in their out-caſted dung. Others vnder the painefull Miniſtery, and while the zeale thereof ſeemes to touch them, are all on the ſpurre, they will cry, and take on as if they were vtterly deſtroyed, they will ſeeme to reforme all whatſoeuer hath beene done amiſſe; but like ſtubborne and deceitfull ſeruants, (that ſtand ſilent and mute before their maſters) they will laugh, and ſpend time idlie, and laſciuiouſly, when they are departed from it: they forget the word, yea, themſelues, and ſo with the dogge *they returne to their wonted vomit.* Others are in ſtrength of bodie and ſoundneſſe of the members, and they need not returne to God till they waxe wan, and weake, and feeble: and then (they ſay) is their time. But let me frame ſuch an opponent and times-enemie this anſwere; If thou doeſt not forſake thy ſinnes, and turne to God till thou be weake and feeble, then thy ſinnes will forſake thee, and not thou them: What thankes is it for a drunkard to giue ouer his drunkennneſſe, when he is not able any longer to goe to the Alehouſe? Or for the Whoremaſter to leaue his whoredome, when he hath no ſtrength for the performance, and execution of his filthie deſire? A man ſhould willingly part with

2 Pet. 2. 22.

with his sinnes euen while he is able to commit them, and not by constraint when there is no remedie. Secondly, the time of weakenesse, dotage, &c. is not Gods appointed opportunitie: If a man would then he cannot soundly turne to God, for all the parts of bodie, and powers of soule will loose their vertue, and neither part nor power can performe their office. The brawne of the armes they fall away; the keepers of the house, that is, the hands which defend the bodie tremble; the strong men, that is, the legges that should carry the bodie, doe bow themselues, and waxe faint, the eyes that looke out at the windowes are darke, and obscure, the Grinders, that is, the teeth, fall out of the head: the doores of the lips are shut, the iawes fallen, and the daughters of singing, that is, the eares are abased, being vnable any longer to heare the sound of Musicke: the memorie is dulled, the vnderstanding darkned, &c. And further least a man should thinke the time of dotage, and of weakenesse the most conuenient time to seeke the Lord, *Salomon* brings in that decrepit age, deafe, blind, lame, halt, short winded, full of aches in his bones, cramps in his ioynts, and sundry diseases in his bodie, trembling on a staffe, with shaking lips, and almost robbed of all senses; as if he might say, Now looke, and tell me whether this weake time, this feeble age, be the acceptable time and day of conuersion? When this age oppressed *Barzillai*, then could he say, *Can I discerne betweene good and euill? Haue I any taste in that I eate or drinke, &c.* He confessed that

Eccles. 12. 3. 4.

2 Sam. 19. 35.

his weakneſſe was ſo great, that both bodie and mind were diſabled from attending on the King, much more from attending this worke of grace. Others alſo are readie to plead the mercifulneſſe of God, to giue toleration to preſumptuous procraſtination: Oh, God is merciſull, hereupon the yong man is looſe, the drunkard ryotous, the rich man cruell, the ſwearer blaſphemous, the adulterer vicious, and each man adulterate and beaſtiall in his kinde; But let ſuch bold flinder-mice know withall, that God is as ſpeedie in iuſtice to puniſh the euill and vngodly men, as he is full of mercie for the vſe and reward of his owne dearelings. The hope of the wicked is hopeleſſe, the Lord hath ſaid it, he will viſit *their iniquities, and laugh at their deſtruction*; and they ſhall finde that true (for all their preſumptions) which the Apoſtle relateth, *viz.* that *it is a feareſull thing to fall into the hands of God, who is a conſuming fire. The mercie of God ſhould lead men to repentance, and make preparation for the day of grace.* Others are forward to excuſe their delay. I pray you, did not the theefe on the Croſſe ſeeke the Lord by Repentance at the laſt houre of his life, and found him to his comfort? I grant its true, but it followes not thereon that euery one ſo ſeeking ſhall partake of GODS fauour. This example was extraordinary, and giuen of God, that ſinners ſhould not preſume, and that true pænitentiaries ſhould not deſpaire. It is folly and great madneſſe to deferre vntill the laſt, in regard of this one patterne and example, it being left without precept. Fie on this ſlaggering and

Pſal. 18. 26. Prou. 1. 28 34.

Heb. 10. 31. And 12. 29. Rom. 2. 4.

and ſtaggering of Chriſtians, who gape after Meteors in the aire, caſt beyond the Moone, and are doubtfull, when they hazard nothing but vanitie, which would hazard their ſoules. They murmure at preſent conuerſion, and ſay with the Diſciples, *This is an hard ſaying, who can beare it?* Or elſe they ſeeke to ſhift it off as they did, who were called on to re-edifie the Temple, and anſwered, *It is not yet time to build, &c.*

Ioh. 6.

Hag. 1. 2.

*Vſe* 2. For inſtruction.

Secondly, this Doctrine may likewiſe ſerue for Inſtruction; God biddeth, and it is our dutie to hold opportunitie by the fore-locke, by a little ſtaying behind, it will ſlip away, and we ſhall not be able to catch hold of it. Now the Lord will be found, but anon he is gone, and will abſent himſelfe, as the Prophet tells vs, *They ſhall goe with their ſheepe and their Bullockes to ſeeke the Lord, but they ſhall not find him, for he hath with-drawne himſelfe from them.* Oh, therefore when God putteth any good motion into our hearts of ſeeking, let vs forthwith addreſſe our ſelues vnto it, as *Abrahams* ſeruant that was ſent to prouide a wife for his ſon *Iſaac*, when he had had good ſucceſſe, and well effected the buſineſſe which he came for, haſted home to his Maſter: And when *Rebeccaes* friends requeſted him to ſtay ten dayes, becauſe they were loath to part with her on the ſodaine, he would not yeeld at any hand: *No, hinder me not*, ſaith he, *ſeeing the Lord hath proſpered my iourney, but ſend me away that I may goe to my Maſter*: So ſhould we ſuffer nothing at all to hinder vs, but euen make haſt to turne to the Lord vpon the firſt motion.

Hoſ. 5. 6. 7.

Gen. 34. 54. 55. 56.

There is a good saying to this purpose in the
Chap. 5. 7. booke of *Ecclesiasticus*, *Make no tarrying to seeke the Lord, and put not off from day to day, for sodainly shall the wrath of the Lord breake forth, and in thy securitie thou shalt be destroyed.*

*Ob:* *Ob:* But it will be said, *Hast makes waste, faire and softly goe farre, soft fire makes sweet Malt, The hastie man neuer wanted woe.*

*Anſ:* *Anſ:* All these be true, and good often in temporall affaires, yea, and sometimes also in busi-
Esay. 8. nesses touching the soule; *Let not him that beleeueth make haste*; be not too credulous of euery thing without triall. But in this case of seeking the Lord, these Prouerbes hold not true, we haue no larger bounds then the present, the instant, the moment. If we slacke our zeale neuer so little, euery baite of drunkennesse, obiect of couetousnesse, presented glance of wantonnesse, will offer it selfe as a temptation, to alter, or at least, to hinder our intended Conuersion. And albeit, they
Math. 8. say as the Deuils said to Christ, *Why tormentest thou vs before the time?* Yet brethren, the time is alreadie come, and now is, wherein God conuerseth with vs most graciously by his Spirit, and most familiarly by his word, let vs therefore gather *Manna* early in the morning before the Sunne melt it away, and let vs walke in the light while we haue it, then shall our darkenesse be turned into light, our sorrow into ioy, our baldnesse into beautie, and for sack-cloath we shall be decked with garments of gladnesse; then shall heauen

and

and earth, Angels and men, and all creatures elſe clap their hands for ioy of our Conuerſion, all meeting in this cloze. Prayſed be the Lord, (who hath ſuch pleaſure in his ſeruants) that he will be found of them to their Saluation.

*Amen.*

FINIS.

FINIS.